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at 10 a.m.
New York

# SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 21st MEETING

Chairman: Mr. TEIRLINCK (Belgium)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 114: UNITED NATIONS COMMON SYSTEM (continued) (A/49/30, A/49/480; A/C.5/49/7 and A/C.5/49/10)

AGENDA ITEM 115: UNITED NATIONS PENSION SYSTEM (continued) (A/49/9; A/C.5/49/3 and A/C.5/49/7)

1. Mr. GODA (Japan) said that his delegation was guided by two important considerations: on the one hand, it was necessary to ensure satisfactory conditions of service for the staff of the Organization, which was absolutely essential if it wished to attract qualified personnel, and, on the other hand, it was necessary to further rationalize the administration of the remuneration system in order to save resources. The common system provided an appropriate basis for efforts to ensure the recruitment of the personnel required by each organization and to encourage mobility within the United Nations system.

2. His delegation supported the recommendations of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) to increase the base/floor salary scale by 4.1 per cent and to increase dependency allowances and education grants. It also endorsed the new performance appraisal guidelines elaborated by the Commission. The appraisal system was a valuable means of improving human resources management. However, it was necessary to examine the effectiveness of the merit award system before it was put fully into effect.

3. In view of the importance of the Noblemaire principle as the basis for determining the salary levels of the Professional staff, his delegation regretted that the Commission had not completed its review of the matter. It strongly urged the Commission to continue its work with all due speed and submit its report to the General Assembly as soon as possible. It also looked forward to receiving the results of the survey of best prevailing conditions of service for the General Service and related categories. Lastly, the decisions reached by ICSC concerning the recruitment of National Professional Officers should help to clarify their responsibilities and conditions of employment.

4. With regard to the pension system, his delegation welcomed the decisions contained in the report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board, including the measures proposed under the "package of agreements".

5. In conclusion, his delegation reaffirmed its belief in the importance of the role played by the International Civil Service Commission and hoped that it would continue to carry out its mandate effectively.

6. Mr. KIERULF (Denmark), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, reaffirmed their support for the United Nations common system. The United Nations would be able to function smoothly and effectively only with a single civil service in terms of remuneration and other conditions of service. It should be recalled in that connection that the salaries which the United Nations offered must be competitive compared to those of other international

organizations. The Nordic countries regretted that ICSC had been unable to complete its study on all aspects of the application of the Noblemaire principle. They recalled the statement adopted by the Administrative Committee on Coordination at its second regular session of 1994 (A/C.5/49/10) and requested ICSC to finalize its study without delay. Proposals on how to make the current remuneration system more competitive were urgently needed, for competitiveness was an important element in the management reform of the United Nations Secretariat as a whole.

7. The Nordic countries noted with regret that the Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations (FICSA) seemed to have decided once again to suspend its participation in the work of ICSC. They emphasized the need to re-establish a genuine and constructive dialogue between the Federation and the Commission. It was very important to give staff representatives the opportunity to present their views on conditions of service, which should be taken into account wherever possible. Accordingly, the manner in which conditions of service within the common system was considered and determined clearly should be reviewed.

8. With regard to the recommendations contained in the report of ICSC, the Nordic countries supported the proposed adjustment to the base/floor salary scale for the Professional and higher categories, i.e., an increase of 4.1 per cent. They also endorsed the recommended increases in dependency allowances as from 1 January 1995. The revised criteria for the employment of National Professional Officers at non-Headquarters duty stations were useful. The Nordic countries had no objection to an increase in the level of maximum admissible education grants. They also could accept the Commission's recommendations regarding the merit award system. The proposals on the merit award system should be seen as a practical implementation of the new performance appraisal system. With regard to appointments of limited duration, the Nordic countries recognized the need for more flexible recruitment procedures and would welcome constructive innovations. However, like ICSC, they emphasized the importance of ensuring that the concept of appointments of limited duration was properly adhered to and that the application of the new system was closely monitored.

9. The report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board and the statements by the Chairman of the Board and the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management in his capacity as the representative of the Secretary-General on investments of the Fund had confirmed the belief of the Nordic countries that the Pension Fund was administered in an efficient manner. They trusted that the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) on the desirability of close monitoring of the actuarial imbalance would be followed. They endorsed the draft resolution proposed for adoption by the General Assembly.

10. Mrs. SHEAROUSE (United States of America) reaffirmed her delegation's strong support for the United Nations common system, which provided many advantages for both the organizations and their personnel. It therefore opposed any unilateral initiative which contravened established rules and procedures.

In that connection, it was concerned at the decision by the International Labour Organization to grant promotions based on length of service, a decision which was based on a misinterpretation of the recommendations of the International Civil Service Commission, which had not even been consulted. Her delegation had listened with interest to the statements by the representatives of the staff associations and regretted the decision of FICSA again to suspend its participation in the debates of ICSC.

11. With regard to the adjustments proposed by ICSC in its report for the year 1994 (A/49/30), her delegation could in principle support an increase of 4.1 per cent in the base/floor salary scale for staff in the Professional and higher categories through consolidation of a portion of post adjustment into salary. The cost to the United Nations regular budget of such an adjustment was estimated at $453,000 for 1995. However, her delegation remained concerned at the linkage between the base/floor salary scale and the mobility and hardship matrix and again encouraged ICSC to address the issue when it reviewed the mobility and hardship scheme, as requested in General Assembly resolution 47/216.

12. The United States delegation could also support an increase of 10.26 per cent in the children's and secondary dependants' allowances, although it continued to have reservations as to whether the latter could be monitored efficiently to avoid abuse. It would support the proposed increases in the education grant, although again with some reservation, bearing in mind the cost of that grant to the common system ($62.1 million per annum). It requested that the information on the cost of the education grant entitlement should be broken down and made available to Member States during the current session. Questioning the need to provide a grant at the tertiary level, it requested the Commission to consider its elimination. Concerning hazard pay, her delegation concurred with ICSC that it should only be paid to staff required to work under extremely hazardous conditions. It was concerned about the linkage now established between hazard pay and the base/floor salary scale and about the proposed level of hazard pay. It therefore suggested that further consideration should be given to the matter.

13. Her delegation strongly recommended that ICSC should defer submission of the studies it was now completing on the application of the Noblemaire principle until the fifty-first session of the General Assembly, which was a "personnel year". With respect to developments concerning the Federal Employees' Pay Comparability Act of 1990 (FEPCA), it endorsed the decision of the Commission to use actual United States pay in calculating the margin comparison rather than the legislated FEPCA pay. It could also accept the decision of the Commission to reflect the special pay systems in eleven federal organizations in calculating the margin by continuing to use the actual number of United States civil servants in each relevant occupation of each special pay system.

14. Concerning the remuneration of the General Service and other locally recruited categories, she took note of the result of the survey conducted in Montreal and concurred with the decision of the Commission not to change the survey methodology during the current round of surveys of best prevailing

conditions of service in the cities where headquarters were located. Although she regretted that the General Service staff of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations had decided to refrain from participating in the survey and to strike, she believed that the survey should proceed as scheduled. She also endorsed the recommendations of the Commission on revised criteria for the employment of National Professional Officers.

15. Her delegation welcomed the recommendations of the Commission on the performance appraisal system. The broad parameters recommended for recognizing meritorious service provided organizations with the flexibility to establish their own systems. The organizations should, however, consult closely with staff before instituting such systems with a view to achieving the desired results.

16. Her delegation also believed that the recommendations of the Secretary-General in his report on decisions of Administrative Tribunals (A/49/480) did not go far enough. It was not sufficient to allow the Commission and the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board to provide factual and technical information to the Tribunals in cases involving appeals against decisions taken on the basis of action by those bodies. The Commission and the Board must also be allowed to argue the merits of their decisions. She therefore hoped that further consideration would be given to the matter.

17. Her delegation supported elimination of the bar in some organizations on the employment of spouses within the same organization, bearing in mind the need to ensure that preference was not given by virtue of the relationship to a staff member.

18. Turning to the report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board (A/49/9), she said that it was important to maintain a balance between the health of the Fund and meeting the needs of its participants and that her delegation agreed with current plans for preserving the principal of the Fund. In view of the unpredictable nature of the financial markets, it was essential that the Fund's investment portfolio should continue to be widely diversified. She also supported the Board's decision to institute new custodial arrangements that would enhance security and achieve cost savings.

19. Her delegation was prepared to support the four measures to which the members of the Board had agreed by consensus. The resulting actuarial savings would represent 0.04 per cent of pensionable remuneration. It believed, however, that the recommendation to reduce to 110 per cent the cap provision of 120 per cent should be an interim measure until such time as that ceiling was fully eliminated.

20. Her delegation understood that, in order to be effective, the United Nations system must also be competitive, and it was prepared to work with others with a view to eliminating the anomalies which prevented it from running smoothly.

AGENDA ITEM 127: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION UGANDA-RWANDA (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 130: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS ASSISTANCE MISSION FOR RWANDA (continued) (A/49/375 and Add.1 and Corr.1 and A/49/501; A/C.5/49/L.5)

Draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.5

21. Miss PEÑA (Mexico), Vice-Chairman, introduced the draft resolution on the financing of the United Nations Observer Mission Uganda-Rwanda and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (A/C.5/49/L.5). In particular, she drew the attention of the Committee members to paragraphs 6, 7, 9 and 10 of the draft resolution concerning the total appropriation, the apportionment of costs and the level of commitments, and to paragraphs 13, 14, 16 and 18. She proposed that, in accordance with the outcome of the informal consultations, the draft resolution should be adopted without being submitted to a vote.

22. Mr. SCOTTI (France), speaking with reference to the evaluation mission entrusted to a private company and concerning security in the Rwandan refugee camps in Zaire, asked the Secretariat to provide details of the terms of reference of that mission, the amount stipulated in the contract signed with the company and the budget from which that amount would be taken, and to state whether there were precedents for that type of contract. His delegation had extreme reservations about resorting to a private company to carry out a mission which by definition came under peace-keeping.

23. Mr. TAKASU (Controller) said that he was not currently in a position to respond to the questions of the French representative, but that the Secretariat would shortly provide the information requested.

24. The CHAIRMAN said he took it that the Committee wished to adopt draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.5.

25. It was so decided.

26. Mr. ROESCH (Germany), speaking on behalf of the members of the European Union in explanation of their position after the adoption of the draft resolution, once again expressed serious reservations about authorizing the Secretary-General to enter into commitments without the opportunity to assess contributions, particularly when such large amounts were involved. He hoped that in the future all Member States would be in a position to accept an assessment equivalent to the total authorized commitment.

27. Mr. SCOTTI (France) welcomed the adoption of the draft resolution on the financing of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda. Nevertheless, he endorsed the statements made during the informal meetings by numerous other delegations deploring the fact that the contract awarded to a private company for the provision of contractual services had been extended on 1 October 1994 without first soliciting international bids, as noted in the report of the Advisory Committee (A/49/501). The situation was made more unfortunate by the

fact that the Secretariat had undertaken to solicit international bids and that the company in question had already been awarded a contract under similar conditions for the United Nations Operation in Somalia. His delegation awaited with great interest the explanations requested from the Secretary-General in the draft resolution, but regretted that it appeared impossible to consider apprising the Office of Internal Oversight Services of the matter. He could only wonder what the original intention had been in establishing that Office.

28. Ms. ALMAO (New Zealand), speaking also on behalf of Australia and Canada, said that, in view of the extreme situation in Rwanda in every respect, their delegations had been prepared to approve a minimum monthly commitment authority and assessment of $17.5 million for the following six months, in line with the Secretary-General's revised request. No adequate justification had been given for the final figure of $15 million, not to mention the $10.5 million suggested by the Advisory Committee in its report. Furthermore, it was contrary to all the principles of financial management to approve a commitment authority without a commensurate assessment. The Australian, Canadian and New Zealand delegations had accepted the compromise of $15 million only because the resolution provided for the financing of the mission to be reviewed again in three months, though unfortunately that would require the Secretariat to submit another budget in February 1995. It was also extremely unfortunate that the Advisory Committee had failed to make a statement on the cost estimate of UNAMIR for the twelve-month period beginning on 10 December 1994.

29. Mr. MANZ (Austria) said that his delegation endorsed the position of the European Union, and deplored the fact that the international competitive bidding procedure had been disregarded in the awarding of contracts. In that regard, it was unfortunate that one delegation, having supported the establishment of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, had nevertheless opposed apprising the office of the matter, even when consensus had been reached to that effect. His delegation would return to the issue of awarding contracts during discussion of other agenda items, since the explanations requested from the Secretary-General in paragraph 16 of the resolution were not a sine qua non of a thorough discussion.

30. Mr. ETVKET (Uganda) said that his delegation, which had joined the consensus on the adoption of the draft resolution, wished to emphasize the fact that, in view of the extremely precarious situation in Rwanda, it was important to give UNAMIR adequate resources. It fully endorsed the position expressed by New Zealand on the commitment authority given to the Secretary-General and believed that the issue of awarding contracts should be examined in the context of peace-keeping operations as a whole and not merely with regard to UNAMIR.

31. Mr. DOSSAL (Department of Peace-keeping Affairs) in answer to the questions asked by the representative of France, said that the Department had asked a British company to produce a short report on the security situation in the refugee camps in Zaire and to advise the Secretary-General as to what specific measures could be taken in that regard. The company had sent two experts to the area. The contract amounted to approximately $25,000, and the company was due to submit its report by the end of November 1994. Should a more thorough

investigation be considered necessary, the usual competitive bidding procedure would be employed. It was also possible that, if necessary, the Zairian authorities would implement the desired security measures themselves or commission other companies to do so.

32. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had completed its consideration of agenda items 127 and 130 and requested the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly.

AGENDA ITEM 107: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1994-1995 (continued) (A/C.5/49/31)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.4/Rev.1

33. The CHAIRMAN recalled that document A/C.5/49/31 contained a statement of the implications of draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.4/Rev.1, adopted by the Committee without a vote the previous week, for the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995. The Chairman of the Advisory Committee had informed him that the Advisory Committee fully concurred with paragraph 5 of the report of the Secretary-General, who indicated that the draft resolution had no implications for the Organization's programme budget.

34. Miss PEÑA (Mexico) requested the Secretariat to clarify paragraph 6 of the statement of programme budget implications, which seemed somewhat ambiguous as to the means of financing the activities of the ad hoc working group of experts. She would like in particular an assurance that the costs of participation of the experts would effectively be covered by the regular budget of the Organization, with the understanding that Member States could, if they so wished, make voluntary contributions to defray a part of those costs.

35. Mrs. RODRIGUEZ (Cuba) would also like clarification on that point. It appeared from draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.4/Rev.1 that the costs relating to the activities of the group of experts should be borne by the Organization.

36. Mr. TAKASU (Controller) explained that the statement of implications was based on paragraph 5 of the draft resolution, which specified that the group's activities would be financed from existing resources. As the statement of implications indicated, the requirements for the participation of the experts would amount to $442,000. Since the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 contained no provision for that amount, it would not be possible until the end of the biennium to see to what extent costs could be covered within the current appropriations. In the meantime, the Secretary-General would welcome voluntary contributions from Member States to fund the activities of the working group and would establish a trust fund for that purpose. That was why the statement of implications indicated that no additional appropriation would be required currently. In any case, the Secretary-General would ensure that the activities of the working group could proceed as planned.

37. The CHAIRMAN said he took it that the Fifth Committee wished, without a vote, to inform the General Assembly that, if draft resolution

A/C.5/49/L.4/Rev.1 was adopted, no additional appropriation would be required currently under the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995.

38. It was so decided.

39. The CHAIRMAN announced that the Committee had completed its consideration of the item and asked the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly.

AGENDA ITEM 113: HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT (continued) (A/49/176 and Add.1, A/49/219 and Add.1, A/49/406, A/49/445, A/49/527 and A/49/587; A/C.5/49/5, A/C.5/49/6 and Corr.1 and Add.1, A/C.5/49/13, A/C.5/49/14, A/C.5/48/37 and Add.1 and A/C.5/48/45)

40. Mr. STÖCKL (Germany), speaking on behalf of the members of the European Union, emphasized that the latter considered good personnel management to be particularly important at a time when increasingly high expectations were being placed upon the United Nations. The European Union member States had therefore given particular attention to the strategy described in document A/C.5/49/5, whose aims were, among others, to modernize and re-energize human resources management throughout the Secretariat. The European Union particularly welcomed the setting up of the new performance appraisal system, which was a central component of the new system of accountability and responsibility and would help to change the basic nature of supervisor-staff relationships, while permitting a real evaluation of professional performance.

41. The European Union supported the principle of the enhanced attrition/early retirement arrangements, and would closely watch the impact of measures taken by the Secretariat in that respect. It also fully supported the proposals concerning the granting of fellowships in the context of the current internship programme and the creation of a pilot project whereby Governments would provide young and qualified professionals to the Organization on a non-reimbursable loan basis for a limited duration.

42. The report on the composition of the Secretariat (A/49/527) contained very detailed statistics. It was important to recall that recruitment was governed by the principles of the Charter, particularly Article 101, paragraph 3, and Article 8. The member States of the European Union would do their best to offer qualified candidates to the Secretary-General, but they believed that recruitment should be speeded up. National competitive examinations were a good means of recruitment but, there again, the posts should be filled within a reasonable period. The costs involved in conducting examinations should be reduced, particularly by making greater use of pre-screening tests. The European Union did not support any change in the quota of P-2 posts reserved for General Service staff who had been successful in the internal competitive examination for promotion to the Professional category. In addition, the same standards should be applied to that examination as to national examinations, particularly in respect of the level of university education required of applicants.

43. The European Union attached great importance to staff mobility, which constituted a guarantee of the adaptability of the Organization. Such mobility should be taken into consideration for the planning of careers and in the consideration of promotions. One way of encouraging mobility would be to assist spouse employment, a point raised by the General Assembly in its resolution 36/130, and regarding which the European Union wished to receive information from the Secretariat. He noted that the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) intended to reexamine the issue, as announced in document A/49/587.

44. Although progress had been made in the recruitment of women to the P-2 and P-3 levels, the percentage of women was particularly low in duty stations away from Headquarters and in senior posts. Steps should be taken to remedy such examples of imbalance, particularly, as mentioned in document A/49/587, through training programmes which gave women better preparation for managerial positions and through the creation of a more supportive working environment for women. Member States should also be encouraged to put forward greater numbers of suitably qualified women candidates.

45. Progress in the area of training, which was so important for the vitality of the Organization, was described in document A/49/445. However, the European Union felt that overdiversification into too many new areas should be avoided, while progress remained to be made in priority areas such as peace-keeping.

46. Regarding the recruitment of staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible, the European Union's view that the desirable-ranges formula remained valid was reinforced by the conclusions of the working group established pursuant to resolution 47/226.

47. To give the Secretary-General increased flexibility in the management of the staffing table, the European Union was in favour of the procedures proposed in document A/49/339 for the reclassification of posts up to the P-5 level, as well as the proposals for increased flexibility in post budgeting.

48. The European Union supported the principle of increased decentralization of authority from the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM), but considered that OHRM should remain responsible for everything connected with human resources planning and personnel policy in the Organization as a whole.

49. Finally, regarding the internal system of justice, the Secretariat had yet to provide the required data permitting a comparison of the cost of the present system with that of the proposed changes; the latter would have to be examined thoroughly. The European Union noted the conference room paper distributed on that topic.

50. Mr. SHARP (Australia), speaking also on behalf of Canada and New Zealand, said it was encouraging to see that a strategy had been devised in the area of human resources management and that changes to the internal system of justice of the Secretariat were being proposed. The delegations of Canada, New Zealand and Australia had already urged Member States to stop "micro-managing" the Organization; that also applied to the management of its human resources.

However, it would be necessary to ensure that there existed open and transparent policies for all aspects of human resources management, including recruitment, placement, promotion and separation, and that those policies were consistently applied. In that light, the strategy contained in document A/C.5/49/5 deserved support.

51. An important aspect of the strategy was that it was based on a comprehensive and integrated approach to all aspects of human resources management. The creation of a central planning mechanism within OHRM was overdue. Similarly, devolution to the Department of Peace-keeping Operations and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs of responsibility for emergency recruitment seemed logical and consistent with the system of accountability and responsibility to be introduced in 1995.

52. The delegations of Canada, New Zealand and Australia supported the strengthening of the internship programme. They also welcomed the emphasis placed on staff mobility, from the point of view of the needs of the Organization and also for individual career development. That also applied to training, which should not be regarded as an end in itself but as a tool of management and career development. The introduction of a genuinely effective performance appraisal system would be central to the development of a new style of management. The Joint Inspection Unit had however issued a warning, recalling unsuccessful attempts in the past. The new performance appraisal system, the introduction of mandatory training for managers, and the implementation of accountability provided the Organization with a real opportunity to eliminate management practices which had resulted in lack of productivity and motivation. To that end, it was important that management training programmes should include facilities for peer assessment so that managers could be made aware of areas where improvement was needed. At the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, the delegations of Canada, New Zealand and Australia had already deplored the lack of a system for measuring performance at the D-2 level and above. They would be grateful if the Secretariat would provide clarification regarding steps to be taken to remedy the situation.

53. The delegations of Australia, Canada and New Zealand would be speaking again on the issue of the improvement in the status of women in the Secretariat. At the current stage, they simply wished to endorse the recommendation by the Joint Inspection Unit that office and department heads and programme managers should be held fully accountable for implementing established policies for women's advancement.

54. It was axiomatic that an effective performance appraisal system would be accompanied by a system of rewards and sanctions. But such a system would need to be transparent and applied consistently. It was therefore also important to emphasize communication and dialogue. Changing the management culture would require the introduction of new blood into the middle and senior levels of management. To that end, implementation of agreed separation packages at the Director and other senior levels should be actively encouraged.

55. He wished to sound a note of caution regarding the triennial review for employees who had not benefited from the promotion process. There was no reason to single such employees out for special treatment or to assume that they should be promoted periodically. A related issue which affected promotions was the mandatory qualification requirements identified in vacancy notices for both internal and external recruitment. Those qualification requirements were seriously out of step with market reality.

56. There were other longer term issues, particularly the question of the balance between career appointments and fixed-term contracts in the United Nations. It seemed that the Organization had a disproportionately large number of middle management and clerical/support staff - two areas that had been substantially reduced in the past decade in the private and public sector. Furthermore, it was not evident that the gains in productivity were commensurate with the investments being made in modern technology.

57. The delegations of Australia, Canada and New Zealand would be submitting specific proposals concerning the internal system of justice in the United Nations Secretariat. They endorsed the general intent of the reforms to create a simpler and more transparent process which should reduce both the number of formal grievances and expedite the resolution of grievances and disciplinary actions where they arose.

58. Finally, the delegations of Australia, Canada and New Zealand attached considerable importance to the issue of the safety of United Nations personnel. They welcomed the adoption by the Sixth Committee of the draft convention on the safety of the United Nations and associated personnel and urged all States to give early consideration to becoming parties to the Convention.

59. Mr. GODA (Japan) said that in his delegation's view, the policies advocated in the document entitled "A strategy for the management of the human resources of the Organization" were in general sound and coherent. However, it was regrettable that no descriptions had been provided concerning the career development policy. It would be appreciated if the Secretariat could address that shortcoming.

60. His Government believed in the utility of national competitive examinations as a means of securing qualified personnel for the United Nations and it had helped administer such examinations at regular intervals. However, all too often, successful candidates from Japan and elsewhere had not been recruited. His delegation would urge the Secretariat to remedy that situation.

61. He welcomed the Secretary-General's proposals concerning the mobility of personnel and training - two areas which he considered important. He also welcomed the introduction of a new performance appraisal system; the latter was essential to a new management culture and to fostering personnel motivation and he hoped that it would be implemented.

62. Concerning the composition of the Secretariat, while supporting the maintenance of the desirable ranges, he noted with regret that the number of

staff members of Japanese nationality - which had increased slightly from 86 to 91 in the previous year - was still far below the desirable range. His Government had done its utmost to propose qualified candidates; it was up to the Secretariat to take the appropriate measures. Similarly, his Government had been making every effort to provide well-qualified female candidates; but if the goals set for 1995 concerning the proportion of women in the Secretariat were to be met, additional efforts would have to be made to recruit women from countries that were not represented or from those that were underrepresented.

63. Finally, at a time when the United Nations was expanding its activities in the field of peace-keeping operations and humanitarian assistance, the importance of ensuring the security and safety of United Nations staff could not be overemphasized. His delegation took note of the adoption by the Sixth Committee of the draft convention on the safety of United Nations and associated personnel and urged the Secretariat to take every measure possible to improve the security of the staff.

64. Mr. SUCHARIPA (Austria) said that the Organization must modernize its management methods and culture. The introduction of a new performance appraisal system, which should more accurately reflect reality, was a first step in that direction. Greater use should be made of agreed separation and the early retirement option in order to free the Organization of staff who performed poorly or whose skills were no longer needed, and salaries should be increased in order to make them more competitive and thus attract the best qualified people to work for the Organization. Recruitment procedures should also be speeded up and made more transparent. The Secretariat had made plans in that regard and his delegation hoped that they would be implemented without delay. On a related issue, the principles and policies regarding recruitment of staff - educational requirements, due regard for equitable geographical distribution and gender balance - should also be applied to the competitive examination for the promotion of staff from the General Service to the Professional category.

65. In order for staff to perform adequately, they needed to be given opportunities for promotion, training and retraining. His delegation encouraged the Secretary-General to extend the Organization's present training programme: the idea of establishing a staff college was worth supporting. On the other hand, his delegation wished to express its reservation concerning the use of retired staff members. That policy circumvented the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, especially with respect to the retirement age. If a retired staff member wanted to make his or her services available to the Organization, that should be done on a strictly voluntary basis.

66. Since the reform of human resources management involved a strengthening of planning capacity, his delegation supported the establishment of a small planning unit. It attached particular importance to the dialogue between the administration and staff representatives. That dialogue had already led to proposals for the establishment of a new internal system of justice which placed emphasis on reconciliation at an early stage. His delegation generally supported the Secretary-General's proposals, especially the proposal that the chairperson of the arbitration board should be recruited externally.

67. His delegation was deeply concerned to find that equality of opportunity was still far from being a reality for women in the Secretariat. Even the modest targets for 1995 - 35 per cent participation of women in posts in the Professional category and 25 per cent in high-level positions - would not be reached. For any appreciable improvement to take place, the Organization would need to adjust recruitment policies and offer women, once they had been recruited, equal opportunities for promotion, including promotion to the middle or higher echelons. However, attitudes towards women would also need to change throughout the Organization and in that regard his delegation welcomed the guidelines on procedure in cases of sexual harassment. As far as Austria was concerned, he was proud to point out that women and men were equally represented in its Permanent Mission and that there were more female Austrian staff members than male in the Secretariat.

68. Another important issue, closely related to the previous one, was that of spouse employment. The Secretary-General had been invited in resolution 47/226 to review the policy in that area. He would appreciate information from the Secretariat as to whether discussions on the matter had made progress.

69. The safety and security of United Nations staff members was of primary importance to his delegation, which welcomed the fact that the Sixth Committee had adopted the draft convention on that matter. He hoped, nevertheless, that additional measures would be taken to provide full protection for all persons working for the United Nations, especially those on mission in high-risk areas.

70. Mr. KURIEN (India) wholeheartedly supported the establishment of a modern system of human resources management as suggested in the report of the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/49/5. The process involved establishing a management culture which would make all managers at all levels more accountable, backed up by an effective system of training, career development and staff performance appraisal.

71. His delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's intention to arrange entry-level competitive examinations. While it was in favour of streamlining the emergency recruitment procedure, including decentralizing certain functions and delegating authority to the various departments, there would be a need to guard against abuse of the system. The idea of using executive search agencies and personnel contractors would require careful study, as that method could have undesirable consequences as had been seen in the context of certain peace-keeping operations. It would be better to set up national rosters of applicants who could be recruited by the Organization when the need arose.

72. According to the note by the Secretary-General published as document A/49/176, less than 15 per cent of senior posts were filled by women, even though many women succeeded in the competitive examinations for Professional posts. He welcomed the Joint Inspection Unit's recommendations on the advancement of the status of women in the Secretariat and said that the Secretariat should make greater efforts to recruit qualified women from developing countries. He hoped that those efforts would go beyond posts subject to geographical distribution.

73. The United Nations must recruit from all parts of the world, since it could find efficient and competent staff everywhere. Having studied the report of the open-ended Working Group of the Fifth Committee, set up under General Assembly resolution 47/226, his delegation considered it necessary to give greater weighting to the population factor in determining desirable ranges. Contrary to the recommendations of resolution 41/206 C, the percentage of posts allocated in proportion to States' population had been reduced from 7.2 per cent to 5 per cent in 1987. It was time to rectify that anomaly and to restore the proportion of posts to the previous level, though that would still be lower than the proportion which had applied between 1977 and 1985 (8.7 per cent).

74. He also noted that only 17 per cent of Secretariat posts were subject to geographical distribution. That proportion fell to 7.5 per cent in relation to the total number of posts in the United Nations system. While some categories could not be covered by the desirable ranges, the same was not true for other categories including Field posts and General Service posts. Recruitment must therefore be carried out on a much wider geographical basis. It might also be timely to examine the possibility of establishing parity between the membership and contribution factors and increasing flexibility at the upper end of the desirable ranges from 15 per cent to 25 per cent.

75. Mr. RI Jang Gon (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) said that the number of unrepresented and underrepresented Member States had greatly increased as a result of new membership in the Organization. His own country had become a fully fledged Member only recently. He recalled that the Fifth Committee had conducted lengthy discussions during the forty-eighth session on the need to give priority to those countries with no representation on the staff of the Secretariat while maintaining the system of desirable ranges and offering equal opportunities to candidates from all Member States for Professional and higher-level posts. While it was true that the Organization needed to secure the highest standards of efficiency and competence, it was important to note that there was a tendency to favour candidates from developed countries over those from developing countries.

76. As the Secretary-General's report (A/49/527) stated, a large number of countries were still without representation in the Secretariat. He was concerned over the inequity of recruitment procedures. The Secretariat's first task should be to ensure that no single Member State would be unrepresented. In that regard he urged that successful candidates in the 1993 national competitive examinations should be offered P-1 or P-2 posts without delay. Judging from the report entitled "Human resources management policies" (A/49/445), the Secretariat did not seem to be aware that candidates from his country had passed that examination and were still waiting to be offered posts.

77. Mr. ALOM (Bangladesh) welcomed the introduction of a consistent and system-wide human resources management policy which would require management involvement at all levels. He regretted, however, that training had not been and was still not being adequately addressed. The Secretary-General's report on the matter had not done justice to issues such as needs assessment, assignment of priorities, resource commitment and performance evaluation.

78. He welcomed the proposals on reform of the internal system of justice in the Secretariat, which would facilitate the streamlining of procedures and the reduction of their cost to the Organization.

79. With regard to gender balance in the Secretariat, he deplored the fact that, despite the declarations and conventions on the advancement of women adopted by the United Nations, no effective programme had been set up to improve the situation of women in the Secretariat. He welcomed the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the matter (A/49/176). The four measures recommended there were essential if women were to enjoy equal opportunities. He emphasized that it was not sufficient to make mere commitments to support the new strategic plan of action for 1995 to 2000, but a system of review and monitoring of the programme should be established.

80. On the subject of recruitment, better interaction with Member States was desirable. Member States should be informed more expeditiously of vacancy announcements and pro-active advertising and campus recruitment campaigns should be conducted in all regions to strengthen rosters of potential candidates and to reduce the lead-time in responding to the filling of vacancies.

81. The delegation of Bangladesh welcomed the new management style based on the decentralization of responsibility. The principles of responsibility and accountability should apply not only to senior management but to the entire staff of the Secretariat. It welcomed the proposed expansion of the foreign service exchange and fellowship programme to include young professionals from States which were underrepresented or unrepresented.

82. On the issue of the United Nations common system, he wished to reaffirm his delegation's support for the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) as an independent expert body and for the United Nations common system. While it was in agreement with the recommendations made by ICSC for the year 1994, the delegation of Bangladesh noted that the Commission had not studied all aspects of the application of the Noblemaire principle, contrary to the decision of the General Assembly, and had confined its response to proposing certain technical adjustments. It therefore urged ICSC to finalize its studies in sufficient time to permit the Administrative Committee on Coordination to consider the subject at its following session.

83. Finally, on the question of the United Nations pension system, the delegation of Bangladesh reserved its comments on the decisions of ICSC on pensionable remuneration and pension entitlements (A/49/30); it believed that the income replacement approach would best address the "income inversion" problem which affected General Service staff. With regard to the investments of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, the stock markets in the countries of South-East Asia still offered prospects for substantial gains.

84. Mr. DEINEKO (Russian Federation) said that the problems of human resources management and of the composition of the Secretariat had always attracted the close attention of Member States. That was particularly true at the current stage of renewal of the Organization's policies and practices in that area. The

Russian delegation generally supported the ideas laid out in the reports under consideration (A/C.5/49/5 and A/49/445). The cornerstone of personnel policies should be the absolute need to ensure the highest level of performance, competence and integrity of the staff of the Organization, as well as the ability to quickly and efficiently deploy or redeploy human resources in order to address the problems faced by the Organization. The achievement of that goal, however, would require a constant influx of talented and energetic staff. In other words, a regular rotation of Secretariat staff was imperative if the Organization was to be receptive to change.

85. While sharing the view that appropriate flexibility was required in the correlation between permanent and fixed-term contracts, the Russian delegation could not support the clearly discernible tilt in favour of permanent contracts. The share of fixed-term contracts should at the very least be no smaller than it had been in the 1980s - approximately 40 per cent - and it would be even better to establish, if possible, parity between the two types of contract. In that context, it would be premature to seek to lift the freeze on permanent contracts before the completion of the Secretariat's restructuring. Moreover, the solution to the problems of geographical representation of Member States in the Secretariat depended to a certain extent on a balance between the two types of contract.

86. Experience had shown the usefulness of the method of secondment of personnel in providing the Secretariat with the services of individuals who had experience and skills in relevant areas, as was the case of the civilian personnel recruited for peace-keeping operations. His delegation advocated further enhancement of that kind of cooperation between Governments and the United Nations.

87. The Russian Federation had already expressed its views on the approaches adopted by the Administration with respect to human resources management. The measures of decentralization and rationalization which had been proposed, including the use of employment agencies to provide technical personnel, should logically bring about a significant redistribution of human resources and result in savings. The Russian delegation therefore noted with surprise that the Office of Human Resources Management had requested the creation of six additional posts. It hoped that the Secretariat would provide clarifications in that regard.

88. The Russian Federation recognized the important role of training. Nevertheless, it proceeded from the assumption that only highly trained professionals were recruited by the Organization. Consequently, the only purpose of training should be to upgrade the qualifications of staff or to familiarize them with the Organization's most recent areas of activity. In any event, the United Nations should not be converted into a personnel training centre. There again, the use of fixed-term contracts would be a less costly solution than the training or retraining of staff members on permanent contracts.

89. The Secretariat pursued a policy aimed at promoting equality between men and women. The Russian Federation supported that policy in principle. At the same time, it believed that achieving the objective of 35 per cent established for the representation of women by 1995 should not be an end in itself, since it would run counter to the principles of recruitment set out in the Charter.

90. The Russian delegation was particularly concerned by the fact that international civil servants continued to be victims of acts of violence. Despite repeated appeals by the General Assembly, not all States strictly fulfilled their obligations to provide security and protection for officials of the United Nations and related organizations. The adoption of the new convention dealing with the safety and security of United Nations and associated personnel, which had been elaborated in the Sixth Committee, would therefore be a highly important measure.

91. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Chairman of the Joint Inspection Unit), replying to a question asked during the previous meeting by the Cuban delegation, said that the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) on recruitment policies and procedures in the United Nations Secretariat had not been completed by the expected date owing to the late receipt of replies to questionnaires. The report should, however, be submitted before the end of the forty-ninth session. In addition to the reports prepared on the status of women (A/49/176) and on the performance appraisal system in the Secretariat (A/49/219), the Joint Inspection Unit would undertake other studies on personnel-related questions, including the following: relations between the Administration and staff, comparison of recruitment methods for posts subject to geographical distribution system-wide, and the status of women in the secretariats of all United Nations bodies.

92. Mrs. RODRIGUEZ (Cuba) requested the Secretariat to provide the Joint Inspection Unit with the necessary information so that the report which had been requested could be submitted at the resumed session of the General Assembly at the very latest.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.